
WATER AND SOCIETY 2019

OVERVIEW

The 5th International Conference on Water and Society took place in Valencia, Spain from 2 – 4 October 2019. The Conference was organised by the Wessex Institute, UK, represented by Professor Stefano Mambretti, and the Polytechnic University of Valencia, represented by Professor José Luis Miralles i Garcia.

The conference, which started in Las Vegas in 2011, is well-established and always attracts a substantial number of contributions from different backgrounds and countries. The variety of topics and experiences is one of the main reasons behind the success of the series.

CONFERENCE PUBLICATION

Accepted papers presented at this conference will appear in Vol. 239 of the WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment (ISSN: 1743-3541). Papers included in this volume will be available Open Access in the eLibrary of the Wessex Institute (<https://www.witpress.com/elibrary>) from where they can be freely downloaded by any interested parties.

OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

The conference was opened by Professor Mambretti who welcomed the delegates to the conference, before paying tribute to the founder of the Wessex Institute, the late Professor Carlos A. Brebbia.

Professor Mambretti then mentioned that the main objective of WIT is the dissemination of knowledge, with particular emphasis on science and engineering. Another way in which this is achieved is by the publication of papers from conferences and Journals, through its publishing arm, WIT Press.

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

The papers on the following topics were presented at the conference:

- Water resources management
- Water and disaster management
- Policy and legislation
- Water, sanitation and health
- Water quality

There were numerous occasions for holding informal discussions during the coffee breaks and the complimentary lunches provided.

PRIGOGINE AWARD CEREMONY

The Prigogine Medal was established in 2004 by the University of Siena and the Wessex Institute to honour the memory of Professor Ilya Prigogine, Nobel Prize Winner for Chemistry. Prigogine's ideas established the basis of ecological systems research. The Prigogine medal to honour his memory is awarded annually to a leading scientist in the field of ecological systems. All recipients have been deeply influenced by Prigogine's work.

The 2019 Prigogine Award Ceremony took place on Wednesday 2nd October at the Polytechnic University of Valencia and was awarded to Professor Luc Montagnier.

The ceremony was opened by the Rector of the University, Dr Francisco J. Mora Mas, who welcomed the delegates to his university and presented Professor Montagnier with his medal.

Professor Luc Montagnier graduated in Medicine as well as in Biological Sciences at the University of Paris. At the age of 23, he became an Assistant to a Professor there.

After a fruitful post-doctoral stay at two British laboratories, he spent most of his career at two renowned French institutions, namely the Institut Curie and the Institut Pasteur in Paris. At the Institut Pasteur, where he spent almost 30 years, he founded the Viral Oncology Research Unit within the Department of Virology. His focus was cancer viruses, mainly the oncogenic retroviruses, and the biochemical aspects of interferon and malignant transformation, including membrane changes in relation to the growth in soft agar, for which he contributed to the revelation of a new property of cultured malignant cells.

In 1983, Montagnier led the team which first isolated the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV1) and brought the first evidence that this virus was the causative agent of AIDS. In 1985 he isolated the second AIDS virus (HIV2) from West African patients.

Montagnier's Laboratory was also the first to show that a large percentage of the white blood cells in HIV infected patients were prone to dying by apoptosis, a process of programmed cell death and to attribute its origin to the oxidative stress occurring in the patients, possibly associated with co-infections.



Prigogine Award Medal Ceremony

His current work is in the diagnosis and treatment of microbial and viral factors associated with cancers, neurodegenerative and articular diseases, using innovative technologies. As a strong advocate of preventive medicine, he is especially concerned with prolonging the active life of ageing people.

Beyond Montagnier's scientific interest is his deep involvement in helping developing countries to acquire knowledge of and access to modern and preventive medicine. As President of the World Foundation for Aids Research and Prevention, he has co-founded two Centres for the prevention, treatment, research and diagnosis of AIDS patients in Ivory Coast and Cameroon.

Ten years ago, Professor Montagnier co-founded Chronimed, an international group of physicians treating chronic diseases including, but not limited to, Autism spectrum diseases, Alzheimer's, Lyme, Multiple Scleroses and Cancer.

Various treatment modalities are used for these multi-factorial conditions. Most of these treatments were developed upon the research of Montagnier and his Chronimed associates.

At its premises in Geneva, Switzerland, Fondation Luc Montagnier, together with its associated Chronimed clinicians, carries out cutting edge research and treatments, bringing in international investigators in various fields.

Luc Montagnier has been awarded many Prizes, including: Rosen (1971), Gallien (1985), Korber (1986), Louis-Jeantet (1986), the Lasker Prize in Medicine (1986), the Gairdner Prize (1987), Santé Prize (1987), Japan Prize (1988), King Faisal Prize (1993), Amsterdam Foundation Prize (1994), Warren Alpert Prize (1998), Prince of Asturias Award (2000) the induction to the National Invention Hall of Fame (2004). He is Commandeur de l'ordre National du Mérite (1986) and Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour (2009)

In 2008, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physiology and Medicine, for his discovery of HIV, together with Françoise Barré-Sinoussi.

He is the author or co-author of 350 scientific publications and of more than 150 patents.

Professor Montagnier presented a special Prigogine lecture "New Paradigm in Biology".

Following this, the University offered a cocktail reception.



Conference dinner at the city Aquarium

CONFERENCE DINNER

The conference banquet took place in the unusual setting of the restaurant located under the city Aquarium, and surrounded by a 360 degrees water tank. The excellent dinner, consisting of different courses with good local wines, helped to create a convivial atmosphere for the participants. The short walk from the conference location to the restaurant allowed them to appreciate some of the works of Santiago Calatrava, including his Palace of Arts, the Museum of Sciences and the Agora, as seen from the bridge built by Calatrava over the old bed of the Turia River. The Aquarium building in the Oceanographic Centre, as well as its companion structure where the restaurant was located, is the work of the renowned Mexican engineer, Félix Candela, and consists of two very attractive hyperbolic paraboloids. The banquet was most successful.

CLOSING OF THE CONFERENCE

The conference was closed by Professor Mambretti and Professor Miralles i Garcia who thanked the delegates for attending and hoped that they would consider attending the next conference in the series.